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THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN THE WAR ON DRUGS

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL MONTIE HESS

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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

**THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN THE WAR ON DRUGS
AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT**

BY

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ABSTRACT

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Within the last 8 years, there has been an increased public and political awareness concerning the problem of international drug trafficking. It is identified as the most serious organized crime problem in the world today, and poses a significant threat to the national security interests of the United States and its allies. The President's personal attention, and congressional approval for tougher anti-drug measures, to include a call for an expanded role of the military, attest to a firm commitment to the continuing struggle against drug trafficking and abuse. How will the military accomplish the anti-drug challenge and continue to be capable of performing its primary national defense role? The scope of this essay will trace the history and effectiveness of the military's participation in assisting civilian authorities in their drug suppression and interdiction efforts. It will also explore the feasibility of that role in view of current funding and legal constraints, and the impact it may have on readiness.

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THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN THE WAR ON DRUGS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Media reports that the aircraft carrier John F. Kennedy and an accompanying task force were heading for South America to conduct surveillance operations off Colombia triggered an outcry from Latins already upset about the U.S. invasion of Panama. After President Bush telephoned Colombian President Virgilio Barco to apologize for the "misunderstanding," the Kennedy's picket duty mission was aborted.¹

The controversy over the Kennedy highlights Washington's enthusiasm for enlisting the military in the escalating war against drugs, but also illustrates the growing concern that the Administration is using a sledgehammer to swat at mosquitoes.

The purpose of this essay is to focus on the expanding role of military forces as a viable element of U.S. national power in combatting the illegal international narcotics trade.

There can be no doubt that international trafficking in drugs is a national security problem for the United States. Therefore, detecting and countering the production and trafficking of illegal drugs is a high-priority, national security mission of the Department of Defense (DOD). In fact, it is a major foreign policy goal to reduce the flow of illegal drugs into the United States and, if possible, to eliminate it. During a news briefing at the Pentagon on 18 September 1989, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney said,

"We will work on the drug program at every phase—at the source, in the delivery pipeline and in support of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. In countries where the plants are grown and the raw materials are converted into drugs, we can provide economic and security assistance, training and operational support for host country forces and assistance to law enforcement agencies in stopping the export of drugs. We will work hard to stop the delivery of drugs on their way to the United States and at our borders and ports of entry. Deploying appropriate elements of the armed forces with the primary mission of cutting off the flow of drugs should help reduce the flow of drugs into the country over time. At the very least, it will immediately complicate the challenge of getting illegal drugs into America and increase the cost and risk of drug smuggling. At home, we will help law enforcement agencies and the National Guard with training, reconnaissance, planning and logistics."2

Under current legislation (Public Law 97-86), U.S. military personnel will be allowed to help U.S. agencies and foreign governments plan assaults on narcotic traffickers, equip police forces and transport them to attack sites. The armed forces will also be permitted to dedicate personnel and equipment (i.e., radar-equipped airplanes or satellites) to fighting drug traffic.³ In the past, military assistance against narcotics had been limited mostly to training U.S. and foreign personnel, and providing temporary loans of equipment on an as-available basis. Until 1981, even that level of aid was described by Caspar W. Weinberger as "very dangerous and undesirable." Also, military leaders have been wary of allowing the armed forces to assume police-related duties because of the prohibitions of the Posse Comitatus Act.⁴

The armed forces are now able to help in almost any area of civilian drug law enforcement except arrests, seizure of

materials and apprehension of suspects. Those restrictions will impose limitations regarding the military's role that will be amplified later in this essay.

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3. Joanne Omang, "Military Role in Drug Fight Outlined," Washington Post, 9 June 1986, p. A-4.
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CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

For the past eight years all branches of the armed forces have been helping the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the Customs Service keep an eye out for would-be drug traffickers. This surveillance has been carried out mostly in the Caribbean and along the 1,900-mile border with Mexico. The Army in particular, has aided civilian agencies by assisting them in their drug surveillance and interdiction efforts through loaned equipment and advice.

Operation "BLAST FURNACE" conducted in 1986, is a prime example of the support provided by the Army and Air Force. The government of Bolivia asked the Department of State for support in eliminating cocaine processing/drug storage sites. Believing there to be a serious threat to the United States from the drug trafficking in Bolivia, the Attorney General and the Deputy Secretary of Defense (in accordance with Title 10 U.S.C. 374) jointly declared the existence of an emergency situation.¹ The Army's specific support included aircrew and logistical support personnel for U.S. Army Blackhawk helicopters which provided quick insertion of Bolivian National Police and DEA agents into cocaine production/cache sites. These Army helicopters flew 1,200 hours in support of 107 operational missions. The U.S. Air Force provided 537 hours of airlift for Army units to and from Bolivia as well as supporting in-country logistics.²

The very fact that the Army carried a huge, and very obvious logistical tail in getting to Bolivia, raises some doubt about their ability to maintain the element of surprise in any such operation. Some analysts believe that the military's innate operational gigantism will hamstring future operations in launching lightning raids against drug operators, who often have excellent intelligence and mobility.³ To keep four Blackhawks in the field, the Army needed to have six helicopters on hand to allow for possible breakdowns. To support six helicopters it needed 160 troops to carry out maintenance, security, kitchen duty and other tasks. To transport the Blackhawks, the Army needed an Air Force Galaxy airlifter.⁴

Despite the logistical support required for BLAST FURNACE, the operation was a limited success. After four months of operation, and 22 destroyed labs, the price of coca leaves dropped from \$125 per hundred pounds to \$15, about \$20-25 less than the cost of growing and harvesting the coca leaves. In addition, some 800 traffickers were estimated to have fled the country during that period. On the other hand, as soon as the U.S. military pulled out of Bolivia, the disruption disappeared and the price of coca leaves climbed to a level just short of its pre-BLAST FURNACE price.⁵

Perhaps the only success of Operation BLAST FURNACE was the resolve and commitment shown by the United States to do something about the drug trade. It demonstrated the ability of the U.S. military, DEA, other U.S. government agencies, and the

Bolivian police to cooperate in a successful joint/combined effort to fight drug traffickers.

The lessons learned from Operation BLAST FURNACE are currently being applied in Peru on Operation SNOWCAP. The operation's goal is to sever the flow of coca from the Upper Huallega Valley, and other source countries. Approximately 140 DEA agents are assigned to the 3 year, \$24 million dollar operation.

The agents received 12 weeks of "jungle warfare training" from the U.S. Army Special Forces prior to the operation.

The DEA agents and military personnel assigned to Bolivia and Peru operate in an advisory capacity. The focus of the operation has been on the cocaine processing and drug trafficking cycle which includes emphasis on laboratory and airstrip destruction. To date, the results have been 194 cocaine laboratories destroyed, 15,500 arrests and seizure of over 43,000 kilograms of cocaine.

On the Arizona-Mexico border, the Army has been running two programs, code-named HAWKEYE, from Fort Huachuca, Arizona. Army trainees learn how to operate OV1D Mohawk observation aircraft with radar and infrared photographic equipment. Any useful data they collect is forwarded to the Border Patrol and the Customs Service. In Operation GROUNDHOG, another mission emanating from Fort Huachuca, Army radar specialists watch the border on the ground. In 1985, the Army detected 518 suspicious movements and, as a result, Border Patrol agents detained 176 suspects. In

addition, the Army has used TSQ-71 mobile air-traffic control radar equipment to help law enforcement agencies detect suspicious aircraft approaching the U.S. border.⁶

The Army and the National Guard have provided a variety of additional support to drug enforcement agencies including loan of night vision imaging systems; specialized training, to include the use of ground radars; use of rifle and pistol ranges by law enforcement personnel; and use of Army National Guard aviation assets for training. Army aircraft loaned to federal civilian drug enforcement agencies have included Blackhawk, Cobras, OH-6 helicopters and Mohawk fixed-wing aircraft. Additionally, the Army loaned the U.S. Customs Service six C-12 King Air aircraft in Fiscal Year 1986 and 1987.⁷

The Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps have provided expert personnel assistance to seven National Narcotics Border Interdiction System centers. The overall contribution to drug enforcement efforts has been well-received. Inside the United States, Army aircraft monitor air and sea traffic for suspicious activity, and soldiers operate radar and communications equipment on behalf of drug enforcement agencies. Meanwhile, at Army posts such as Fort Benning, Ga., Ranger instructors train federal drug enforcement agents to operate and survive in a jungle environment.⁸

Army helicopters have been in the Caribbean since 1986, providing support to Bahamian police and drug enforcement agents. In Bolivia, Colombia and Peru, Army training teams are teaching military skills to local police and DEA agents who face

both drug cartels and insurgents who often are supported by drug money. South American governments rely on U.S. Army mechanics and technicians to teach their personnel how to operate and maintain the sophisticated equipment that the United States has loaned them. The U.S. Army also is teaching such things as helicopter maintenance and jungle flying skills to DEA personnel serving in South America.⁹

In sum, the Department of Defense is an active if cautious participant in the nation's drug control effort and can make a substantial contribution if it has a clear mission and if its assets are used intelligently and efficiently.

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CHAPTER III

MAJOR CONSIDERATIONS

There are three major considerations which govern the extent to which the Department of Defense can provide support to civilian authorities. These considerations are: the legal restrictions on the use of military personnel for U.S. civil law enforcement; the effect on readiness of providing such support; and last, funding.

Legal Considerations. Originally, the Constitution provided both a means of external defense in the form of maintaining a navy, and a means of keeping internal order through state militias. The drafters of the Constitution clearly intended to constrain the use of the army in domestic affairs, thus explaining our national aversion to maintaining a regular army.¹

The limited ability of the DOD to participate with or assist civilian law enforcement agencies is traced to the provisions of the Posse Comitatus Act, Title 18 United States Code, Statutes 1385 of 1878. The original Posse Comitatus Act only applied to the U.S. Army. The U.S. Air Force was added to the Act when it became a separate service. The U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps are not subject to the Posse Comitatus Act. However, by DOD Regulations and U.S. Navy policy, both are subject to the provisions of the original Posse Comitatus Act. The Posse

Comitatus Act only applies to the U.S. Army National Guard when the unit is in Federal status per the provisions of Title 10, USC, Chapter 18, Section 376. National Guardsmen are not under the Posse Comitatus Act until called to active duty. The provisions of the Act apply to active duty personnel, but not retired; applies only to the United States Army Reserve (USAR) while on active duty; applies to Army National Guard only on federal, not state, active duty; does not apply to civilians employed by the Army.² The Act recognizes that the National Guard are under the Governors' control when on State Active Duty (SAD), and the limitations of Posse Comitatus do not apply. The peacetime commander is the governor. The USARs fall under the same provision as the Regular Army regardless of their training status. An active duty service member off duty, in a private capacity may assist civilian law enforcement agencies as long as the assistance is not directed by DOD.

Until 1981, DOD assets were not available to assist civilian law enforcement agencies in the fight against drug trafficking. In December 1981, Congress enacted amendments to 10 USC Statute 371-378 (Public Law 97-86), permitting limited DOD assets to be made available within designated constraints. This amendment allows a greater range of assistance to civilian law enforcement agencies, and clarifies the type of support the military may provide.¹²

The extraterritorial application of the Posse Comitatus Act is unsettled as a matter of law. Currently, the interpretation of PL 97-86, provides limited authority for military assistance to federal law enforcement officials, "outside the land area of the United States". Such assistance does not extend to search, seizure, or arrest in international waters and airspace. The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 placed similar restrictions to those of Posse Comitatus and PL 97-86 on U.S. drug interdiction efforts in the territory of a foreign state.³

Recently, the U.S. Attorney General has concluded that U.S. law does not prohibit U.S. military forces from exercising authority to arrest drug traffickers, international terrorists and other fugitives overseas. The administration's position, which could substantially expand the Pentagon's role in the international drug war, is based on a 3 November 1989 legal opinion requested by the White House and issued by the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel.⁴ The ruling, which has not been publicly released, prompted a storm of criticism from Congress that the Justice Department was authorizing the U.S. Armed Forces to act in violation of U.S. law.

The Justice Department ruling, entitled "The Extraterritorial Effect of the Posse Comitatus Act," opens the door to a potentially wide range of military actions overseas that could be designated as "law enforcement" operations and, therefore, would not require congressional consultation.⁵

The new authority also could complicate U.S. anti-drug efforts

in Latin America and stir up a wave of anti-American sentiment. Officials of Colombia, Peru, Bolivia and other Latin nations where the most-wanted drug traffickers reside, have agreed to the presence of U.S. law enforcement agents for some time, but have adamantly opposed the introduction of U.S. military forces within their borders for counternarcotics operations.⁶

Effect on Readiness. By law (10 U.S.C. 376), military support in providing assistance to civilian authorities in their drug suppression efforts cannot degrade the Armed Forces' readiness to perform assigned military missions. The character and extent of the Defense Department's involvement in efforts to assist in the interdiction of drug trafficking must be weighed against DOD's capacity to accomplish its primary mission: maintain national security.⁷ There can be no doubt that international trafficking in drugs is a national security problem for the United States. Therefore, detecting and countering the production and trafficking of illegal drugs is a high-priority, national security mission of the Department of Defense.

Greater interdiction efforts by the Army would probably divert us from normal training. Operational activities would likely result in a decline in readiness since most anti-drug operations would not provide the type of training essential to meet operational requirements of conflicts and war.⁸ However, the 20 December 1989 invasion into Panama is indicative of a cultural change sweeping through the Department of Defense and the Armed Services that is focusing U.S. military tactics and weapon

production toward low intensity conflicts and away from the preparation for a full scale war against the Soviet Union.⁹ This change, reflected in Service initiatives in weapon procurements and training, is part of a growing recognition by top Pentagon leaders that the military must strengthen its capability to conduct war fought in the jungles and deserts of the Third World.¹⁰

The military success of Operation JUST CAUSE can in part be attributed to this realization: U.S. forces are preparing to meet the most likely threat of the 1990s and beyond, the so-called low intensity conflict.¹¹ Currently, military planners list drug interdiction as one of the indirect action missions. Indirect action, as an interagency function, requires close military and civilian interaction all the way down to the field level. Recognizing this imperative is the key to organizing the federal government and the DOD in combatting drugs.¹²

Funding. Department of Defense is not permitted to allocate funds specifically for a purpose other than the national defense. In general, other agencies must reimburse DOD for support provided to them unless substantially equivalent training benefits accrue to DOD from such provision or the support is provided incidental to a military mission. The applicable statutes are the Economy Act and the Leasing Statute.

By providing support on a reimbursable basis or at no cost when such support is incidental to training already funded, we

maintain flexibility in employing active forces so as not to detract from military preparedness while contributing to drug interdiction efforts.¹³

The military is considering several options that will allow the Services to trim \$450 billion from their annual budgets from 1992 to 1994. Late last year, Defense Secretary Dick Cheney directed the services to find ways to cut a total of \$180 billion from the annual budgets. In 1991, the Army must cut almost \$5 billion from its 1991 budget request of \$81.8 billion. What effect the Defense budget cuts will have on the U.S. drug effort is still unknown.¹⁴

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2. U.S. Department of the Army. Army Regulation 500-51, Emergency Employment of the Army and Other Resources: Support to Civilian Law Enforcement. Washington: 1 July 1983, p. 2-1e.
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6. Joseph B. Treaster, "Battle Against Drug Trafficking is Lanquishing in South America," New York Times, 1 January 1990, p. 1.
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CHAPTER IV

THE PRESENT

Curtailling the illegal flow of drugs into the United States is a statutory responsibility of the U.S. Customs Service, the Coast Guard, and the Drug Enforcement Administration. The question is not whether the military services are going to do something against the drug flow into the United States, but how, and specifically what are they going to do? A senior defense Department official summed up the challenge:

"Some Pentagon officials see themselves being dragged into an open-ended conflict—one that could drain military resources already stretched thin by America's commitment to NATO and other U.S. security interests around the world. They worry that the politicians in Washington will be tempted to use the military as a bottomless well of manpower instead of allocating money and people to less dramatic aspects of the struggle against drug use in the United States."¹

Under the leadership of President George Bush, there is now recognition that winning the drug war will require the combination of interdiction with treatment, education, prevention and enhanced law enforcement.² On 5 September 1989, President Bush announced his plan for a comprehensive, integrated drug control strategy. When he specifically assigned the DOD an expanded support role, the armed services suddenly found themselves drafted into the national strategy to combat

drugs.3

In response, Secretary of Defense, Dick Cheney, sent a message to all the commanders-in-chief of the unified and specified commands informing them that reducing the flow of drugs into the United States is a high-priority, national security mission.4 In addition, the message directed the CINCs to formulate plans on how they intend to carry out that mission in their particular areas of responsibility. Specifically, Secretary Cheney was quoted:

"While it would be up to the commanders-in-chief to provide the precise details for carrying out the President's drug mission in their areas, I've given them general direction in which the department should move to achieve a more forward-looking posture. I'm asking the Atlantic Command to prepare a plan for a substantial Caribbean counternarcotics task force, with appropriate planes and ships to help reduce the flow of drugs from Latin America. I'm asking Forces Command for a plan to deploy appropriate forces to complement and support the counternarcotics work of the U.S. law enforcement agencies and cooperating foreign governments. That effort will be focused especially on the southern border with Mexico. I'm asking the North American Aerospace Defense Command to plan to increase detecting and monitoring of illegal drug traffic to the United States. I've asked Southern and Pacific Commands to plan to combat the production and trafficking of illegal drugs in conjunction with cooperating host countries in their areas of responsibility."5

The armed services were increasing their efforts even before the President's announcement. In February, 1989, the Department of Defense activated the U.S. Pacific Command's Joint Task Force 5 at Oakland, California, to detect and monitor aircraft and

ships suspected of smuggling drugs into the United States from the Pacific. The U.S. Atlantic Command's JTF 4, at Key West, Florida, was activated in April, 1989, and conducts counter-drug operations primarily in the Caribbean Basin.⁶ In November, 1989, DOD announced that JTF 6 would be headquartered at Fort Bliss, Texas, to support civilian law enforcement officials in stemming the flow of illegal drugs across the U.S. southwest border. In establishing JTF 6, DOD designated Forces Command as a supported command, forcing Army, Marine Corps, Navy and Air Force elements to work together in support of its mission. While the troops are not expected to engage smugglers, the danger was dramatized on 13 December 1989 when four Marines working with Border Patrol officers near Nogales, Arizona, got into a firefight with drug traffickers on horseback. The smugglers fled, abandoning 573 lbs. of marijuana.⁷

The Defense Department's new willingness to risk involvement in the battle against drugs is a reversal from its position that the armed forces are not equipped or trained for such duty. The military went along only reluctantly in 1988, when Congress, fed up with Pentagon foot-dragging, designated the Defense Department as the lead agency for "detection and monitoring" of drug smuggling. Now with the Soviet threat receding and Congress calling for defense cuts, the Pentagon welcomes any new mission.⁸

We must be very careful. Though Secretary Cheney's initiatives will add much needed support and equipment to the

badly overextended interdiction efforts, the Pentagon's initial misgivings about its drug involvement were well founded. Troops trained to locate and destroy hostile forces are less effective at the more delicate task of tracking and assisting in arresting smugglers, which more often depends on good police work. In 1984, the U.S. Navy set up sea checkpoints off Colombia in an anti-drug maneuver dubbed Operation HAT TRICK. The operation was cut short because the results did not seem to justify the the costs. Nor does the military have much of an interdiction success record. In Viet Nam, it was never able to close the primitive Ho Chi Minh Trail; quarantining 88,000 miles of U.S. shoreline is at least as daunting.⁹

In a sense, the resourceful smugglers are emulating the Viet Cong by shifting to low-tech means of evading high-tech interception. Large cargo planes and big ships carried marijuana in the 1960s, and light planes were favored in the 1970s and early 80s. Today's traffickers prefer tramp steamers out of Haiti, rattletrap tomato trucks out of Mexico and the large shipping containers that move through all U.S. ports and border crossings. Last year, through the use of a new computerized profiling system, authorities made huge cocaine seizures from containers. Of the 8 million containers arriving in the U.S. by truck or ship in 1989, only 3% were checked by inspectors. If military forces were to search a large percentage of such shipping, commerce would be choked and the outcry would be thunderous.¹⁰

Beyond the practical problems, U.S. military involvement in the anti-drug battle looks like Teddy Roosevelt's Big Stick policy to many of our Latin friends.

Many Latin American countries, already critical of the U.S. invasion of Panama as a revival of gun-boat diplomacy, are so sensitive to a wider U.S. military role in drug control that even raising of the matter could complicate relations.¹¹

In Peru, the reported departure of two U.S. warships for the Caribbean as anti-drug pickets was front-page news in all of Lima's major daily newspapers, with a large-type headline in one saying: "U.S. Troops en Route to Colombia." The paper also reminded readers of the "bloody invasion of Panama."¹²

Other Latin American nations also have sharply censured the Panama invasion. While U.S. officials have sought to portray that criticism as pro forma, Latin American public opinion—mindful of the long history of U.S. interventions—is deeply suspicious of any U.S. Military activity in the hemisphere.¹³

Acceptance of a greater U.S. military role in the drug fight so soon after the Panama invasion could create political problems for the region's presidents.

In Colombia, with presidential elections set for May, the opposition Conservative Party criticized Liberal President Virgilio Barco for the U.S. naval plans—publicized, then postponed. Barco then reacted negatively to the plan. Popular reaction in Colombia was sharply negative. The radio

network that first revealed the plan, for example, called it a virtual "blockade" that would harass legitimate maritime traffic and threaten the nation's sovereignty.¹⁴ Independent Radio Caracol reported that Foreign Minister Julio Londono Paredes would resign because Barco did not share Londono's strongly expressed opposition to the U.S. naval plans.

The newspaper El Espectador—which has been a strident opponent of drug trafficking and was hit by one of the traffickers' terror bombings—also blasted the plan, saying in an editorial that "Colombia can in no way accept armed intervention or a blockade...under the oblique premise of patrolling international waters."

A spokesman for the Conservatives called for a special session of Colombia's Congress to investigate the "grave" situation, and called into question the government's assertion that it had not discussed with U.S. officials the use of Navy ships.¹⁵

The controversy came before U.S. officials seemed to have decided exactly what a proper role for the U.S. military in the drug fight might be. For example, officials have discussed the installation of radar in the mountains of Peru, Colombia and Bolivia to track airplanes that ferry coca paste from the coca growing regions to Colombia for final processing. U.S. and local technicians would man the radars, passing along information to local authorities.

However, sources here said that a recent U.S. survey to examine the idea of a radar installation in Peru's Upper

Huallaga Valley, source of 60% of the world's coca, was inconclusive. "There are basically only three air lanes into and out of the valley," said a Peruvian government source involved in the fight against the traffickers. "We know where the planes are. If the U.S. wants air intercepts, all they have to do is give us a couple of fast helicopters. The narcos are flying single-engine planes, they aren't flying Mirages."16

The Latin leaders, notably Garcia, have said that for their countries, drug trafficking is largely an economic and social issue. Peru and Bolivia are looking for ideas on how to replace the hundreds of millions of dollars now generated by growing coca. Colombia is looking for the United States to help support its legitimate exports—notably coffee—while the government tries to stem the export of cocaine.

Talk of an expanded U.S. military role also gives ammunition to critics who say the United States wants to fight the drug war exclusively in the Latin countries, with Latin casualties, while refusing to face up to the basic issue of continued high U.S. demand for cocaine.

Still, the United States and the three cocaine producing countries have agreed to include military units from each country in a stepped-up war on drugs. The details of the plan were coordinated at the recently held Drug Summit held in Cartagena, Colombia on 15 February 1989.

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CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The United States has declared war on illegal drugs and has charged the Defense Department as the lead federal agency to monitor and detect air and maritime drug traffickers. The difference in this war is that the military isn't going to fight. The officials involved with the planning make it clear that although more military personnel and equipment will be diverted to the effort beginning in 1990, the basic support-only nature of the military's role will not change.

This poses tremendous challenges for the armed services as we begin this decade. As the annual ritual begins of presenting and defending the DOD budget to Congress, the Pentagon is searching for new ways to help justify its spending plans.

Government and private experts agree that the threat of war with the Soviet Union is diminishing. As a result, the nation's military services argue that a portion of the Pentagon budget in the 1990's must be devoted to combatting drugs and being prepared to bring American military power to bear in the Third World.

Are the Services being asked to do more with less? The fact of the matter is that the President and Congress have declared that the international drug traffic affects the national security interests of the United States and its allies. Money is being added to the budget for that purpose and there is no question that trade-offs and choices will have to be made. Once

the commanders-in-chiefs (CINCs) submit their detailed plans, these trade-offs and choices can be made with a view to greater allocation of resources in terms of time, men and equipment than has been true in the past.

The trend in anti-drug abuse legislation reflects more funding and command and control of various agencies charged with interdicting the flow of illegal drugs. Recent legislation (Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988) has authorized a Cabinet level agency charged with unifying the various federal agencies' efforts in the "War Against Drugs." Until the Office of Drug Abuse Policy is fully operational, the funding and command and control issues will continue to be in dispute. With the creation of this office, a feasible solution would be to place the agencies tasked with drug interdiction under one command with a "Joint Operations Plan," which clearly identifies the goals and a unity of effort to combat the flow of illicit drugs.

Currently, it is difficult to measure DOD support to counternarcotics operations. Counternarcotics operations are usually performed under the auspices of "Incidental To Training." They are executed as a single service dedicated (primary) mission, but are usually a Joint (with another Armed Service) mission without an organized Task Force Command and Control structure, so do not have clearly set goals and objectives.

The role of the Department of Defense will increase in counternarcotics missions. Additional resources, such as

aircraft, equipment, and manpower, will be loaned to the civilian law enforcement agencies that are tasked to interdict the illicit flow of drugs. DOD will continue to offer specialized schools training and operations planning to the law enforcement agencies.

The law enforcement agencies' drug interdiction strategy appears to target the flow of drugs at their source of origin, shipment, transshipment, and distribution. These four areas are where drugs are most susceptible to interdiction. It is during the processing of cocaine that maximum number of assets are available and vulnerable. While drugs are being processed in clandestine laboratories the transportation, precursor chemical, laboratory equipment and personnel, security, communications, and raw and finished products are in a static location at the same time. The critical requirement to locate and interdict illicit drug flow at the clandestine laboratory or in transshipment hinges on accurate and timely intelligence gathering. The lack of a common interfacing intelligence data base for all federal agencies tasked to interdict the flow of drugs continues to deter the effectiveness of the war on drugs. It is the intelligence function, or Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB) that the DOD can play a key and essential role. But for DOD to be given an increasing role, specific, measurable and achievable goals must be clearly defined. The narcotics threat to the United States must be translated into a viable mission statement. Upon the resolution of the command and control issue, DOD's resource assets may be called upon to

participate in a dramatically increased role. Without changes to current legislation, future DOD support to drug interdiction missions will impact negatively on unit readiness. The counternarcotics mission must not result in deprioritizing vital training and operational requirements.

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